



Carers Week 2012

18th - 24th June



Summer 2012

This year's theme is *'In sickness and in Health.'* The week will highlight the impact caring has on carers' own health and wellbeing. It is an opportunity to remind key organisations of their own responsibility too. We will be highlighting how better support for carers can make a real difference. This could be by offering them health checks, signposting to services and ring-fencing money for carers breaks.

Carers Week will also be asking local authorities to make sure carers needs aren't being ignored when they are making cuts to social services.

Listed below are the organisations supporting Carers Weeks and their details may be of help:



Age UK - We have a vision of a world in which older people flourish. We aim to improve later life for everyone through our information and advice, campaigns, products, training and research. Info line: 0800 169 6565 www.ageuk.org.uk



Carers Trust - We work to improve support, services and recognition for anyone living with the challenges of caring, unpaid, for a family member or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or addiction problems. Carers Trust telephone: 020 8498 7900 www.carers.org



Carers UK - We help carers. When caring affects you and your family, Carers UK is here to provide the support and advice you need. Carers UK Adviceline: 0808 808 7777 www.carersuk.org



Marie Curie Cancer Care - We provide free nursing care to people with terminal cancer and other illnesses in their own homes and the charity's hospices. Freephone: 0800 716146 www.mariecurie.org.uk



Independent Age - We provide a national information and advice service for older people, their families and carers, focusing on three vital areas: social care, welfare benefits and befriending service. Independent Age advice: 0845 262 1863 www.independentage.org



Parkinson's UK - We are the Parkinson's support and research charity. For more than 40 years we've been working to find a cure and improve life for everyone affected by Parkinson's. Helpline: 0808 800 0303 www.parkinsons.org.uk



Macmillan Cancer Care - We provide practical, medical, emotional and financial support, listen to people affected by cancer and work together for better cancer care. Macmillan SupportLine: 0808 808 0000 www.macmillan.org.uk



MS Society - We are the UK's leading multiple sclerosis charity. We offer a listening ear through our helpline. Providing information, grants and support, funding research and fighting for change; we're there for everyone affected by MS. MS Helpline: 0808 800 8000

Free NHS Healthchecks are now available at Springmead for carers between 40-74 years.



Everyone is at risk of developing heart disease, stroke, diabetes or kidney disease. The good news is that these conditions can often be prevented – even if you have a history of them in your family. Have your free NHS Health Check and you will be better prepared for the future and be able to take steps to maintain or improve your health.

The healthcheck involves some simple questions about your medical history, measurements of your height, weight, blood pressure and a simple blood test for cholesterol. Your results will be explained and you will be advised how to maintain your health for the future.

Contact us now to book yours !

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Being a carer is hard work, but you need to look after yourself. There are so many demands on your time every day that it can be difficult to find time for yourself. That stress can build up, so looking after yourself is important when you're a carer. Keeping well reduces the risk of you being unable to look after someone due to a problem with your own health. But no one can plan for every eventuality, and we all get ill sometimes. Below are just a few tips to help you keep well.

Healthy diet

Eating well is a vital part of looking after yourself. A balanced diet includes at least five different portions of fruit and vegetables a day. These can be fresh, frozen and tinned. Starchy foods such as bread, cereals, potatoes, pasta and rice are also vital. About a third of your diet should consist of starchy foods. Choose wholegrain bread or cereal as these are higher in fibre and nutrients such as B vitamins, calcium and iron. Cut back on salt and sugar. The same goes for saturated fats and 'trans fats'. They can push up your cholesterol level and increase your risk of heart disease. Unsaturated fats, on the other hand, can reduce your cholesterol levels and provide you with essential fatty acids.

Exercise

Exercise is vital for your physical and mental health. It helps you deal with stress and makes you feel better emotionally. Physical activity also helps to make your heart stronger, keeps you supple, and reduces all sorts of health risks. Walking, swimming, housework, gardening and even walking upstairs can make a difference. Ideally, you should take 30 minutes of moderate exercise five or more days a week. That means you should feel warmer and breathe more heavily than usual. If you haven't taken any exercise recently, build up slowly.

Sleep

If you're looking after someone who needs a lot of care, are combining caring with a job, or are feeling depressed, you probably aren't getting enough sleep. This in turn can make it harder to cope, and it can further affect your mental health. If you're having trouble sleeping, try to take some exercise during the day, as this can help. Relaxation exercises can also help. If you can't sleep because the person you care for wakes you, you may need to get extra help. Contact your GP or talk to the local authority of the person you're looking after, and it will either assess your needs and the needs of the person you're caring for, or look again at any assessments that have been done in the past.

We hope you find this information helpful, if you have any ideas for our next newsletter, please let Kirsty know.

We're on the Web!

www.springmead-surgery.co.uk